

TOBACCO GROWING IN THRACE

249 During an interview with some peasants in the office of the commune
276 secretary of Toxotae in Thrace during May 1955, I was surprised to see
656 some of the men pull out pink cigarette paper in which they expertly rolled
cigarettes for a leisurely smoke.

"But why the pink paper?" I wanted to know.

"We are tobacco producers," they answered with an air of distinct pride.
"We can keep some of the crop for our own use, but must use pink paper
to distinguish our cigarettes from those that are bought."

"Yes," a gendarme added. "Any time I see a person smoking a pink
cigarette I can go up to ask for a certificate showing that he is a tobacco
grower and thus entitled to 'roll his own!'"

249 This conversation, which lasted for more than four hours, gave me an
[123] even better understanding of tobacco farming than I had gained on previ-
[312] ous trips, as did frequent visits in the fields with the peasants who were
transferring the plants from the seedbeds to the carefully prepared land or
hauling barrels of water in their oxcart from a spring or well to the place
where the planting was going on. What was most helpful of all, however,
was the intimate story of one tobacco village, as described in the Near East
Foundation study mentioned earlier. It gave me a deeper realization of the
problems that the people there continue to face.

621 Dafnon, a village of 1145 people in 1952, is northwest of the city of
162 Xanthe. This community, like so many in Northern Greece, was settled by
[167] Greek refugees from Asia Minor and the Pontus following the departure
of 127 Turkish families in 1924. By 1935, 294 families had moved in,
attracted as they were by the rich vegetation, the good climate of this semi-
mountainous area, and the possibility of raising a high-priced product such
as tobacco. When the first official land redistribution was carried out in
1935, and a second in 1938, it became apparent that the allotments were
too small for the support of a family, and so people began to leave. Today
there are 255 families.

621 The village, covering slightly over 70 acres, sprawls over a hill. Two
36 former Turkish mosques have been converted into Greek Orthodox
churches; six grocery shops have total assets of less than \$1700; three of
the six coffeehouses attract the young men because each has a gramophone
and a battery radio; the village school, destroyed along with many of the
[727] houses during the guerrilla war in 1948, was rebuilt in 1950. Outside the
[526] village is an athletic field on which 30 young men, members of the sports
[373] club, practice faithfully in an effort to uphold their reputation as the best
football (soccer) team in the area. In the evening, the streets are dark,
for Dafnon has no electricity and its people must rely upon kerosene lamps.

621 Of the 255 families previously mentioned, 220 own land; 32 own no

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Woman's Work Is Never Done

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reveal only some of the traits of the husband-wife relationship in rural Greece. It is equally important to see how this partnership operates day by day, season by season, year by year, for it is in the sharing of a common life, with its hardships and flashing joys, that this companionship based on mutual respect is fashioned. Great is the wife's satisfaction if her husband is considered a good provider. If he is, people say: "Tas dinei tou pouliou to gala" (He brings the bird's milk to her), or "Kai-tou pouliou to gala echai" (She even has the milk of the bird). Such phrases go back to the practice of serving eggs beaten in milk to the sick, thereby showing that good care is being taken.

The wife, in addition to watching her own behavior toward her husband, is also responsible for seeing that the children are respectful. The lessons learned in the younger years tends to persist through adolescence into adulthood. Once while sitting at a meal in a Greek home I noticed the young man leave the table. Curious about his exit, I asked: "Where is Petros going?" The father, with a pleased look on his face, said: "He is going out to smoke a cigarette. He does not smoke in front of me." And wherever I went I asked young men singly or in groups whether or not they smoked in the presence of their fathers and found only a small fraction that broke this taboo. To be sure, in some villages and in some homes the young man no longer takes a trek outside if he wants a smoke, but he knows he is going against an old established custom. In one group of nineteen young men, for instance, only three said they would smoke in front of their fathers; in another group of twenty-eight, again only three said they would do so.

The son also shows respect for his father by not going to the same coffee-house where his father is or is apt to go, but there are regional variations. In villages of the Pelion (near Volos, Thessaly) a man may take his son or even his wife to the coffeehouse, but in the words of the commandant of gendarmerie there "they may act this way near Volos but in my village in Boeotia it would be a great shame if the father and his son were in the same coffeehouse, and no woman would think of entering." As a general rule, even fewer of the young men would accompany their fathers to a coffeehouse than would smoke in their presence. In some of the smaller villages the people say that they do not have enough cafés and so the possibility of the two generations staying apart is not very great.

But on every hand there are signs that the formal etiquette governing respect is breaking down. One well-informed official near Salonica said, "The basic Greek tradition of showing respect for elders is weakening. Now you see boys teaching their fathers how to play backgammon and cards. In the United States you would think this fine but over here our system is patriarchal, and the young American starts life outside the home at an earlier age." A folklorist pointed out that in the past the reverence for Greek customs was looked on as necessary for national survival, especially under the Turks and when people were isolated.

Courtship and Marriage

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for the brother is supposed either to avenge any violator of his sister's honor or, if she is to blame, to punish her. Whereas formerly he was supposed to act swiftly, today he tries to get the man to marry his sister; if the man does not, then the brother, "if he wants to rinse the honor of the family," beats or kills the man. He may kill his sister if she is thought responsible. Nowadays matters seldom come to such an extreme point, but the tradition of protection is still very strong. The folksongs reinforce it, as shown by these summaries of two from the island of Euboea.¹

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The Betrayal

A bad young girl dressed herself in European clothes, got her lover and went to the coffeehouse. She ordered the proprietor to bring coffee and the hubble-bubble (narghile, or pipe whose smoke passes through water). Two friends of her brother betrayed her. They said to the brother: "Why do you sit there, Vangeles, and do not go to the coffeehouse to see your sister who 'drinks' the hubble-bubble?"

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Vangeles got up and went to the coffeehouse and found the bad sister who was "drinking" the narghile. "Get up, Eurydice, to see your shame. You, who have put me and all our family to shame."

He thrust his knife in her twice in the right side, striking the liver and half of the heart. Two words the poor thing was able to say before she dropped and was dead: "The friends of my brother were my death because I had the courage to have a boy friend." The friends of the brother took her up, carried her home, and handed her over to her mother.

Soussa

Soussa, the willowy, the pride of Kyme, loved Saribeys, the handsomest boy of the village. He loved her and she loved him for fifteen years. She had a brother who was away with the consuls; every morning she would sit on her bed, take her little handkerchief and fill it with tears. Her master [lover] asks her, "What is wrong with our Soussaki? Why does she sit and cry?" and her mother tells her, "Hush, my Soussa, don't cry and don't torment yourself. For your sake your brother is roaming in foreign countries."

At night, at midnight, they heard bang after bang on the door. Her mother shouted to her and her master told her, "Get up, my Soussa, open and see who is outside." Soussa got up, opened, and saw her brother. Immediately she thought and she became faint [her eyesight became shorter]. Her brother said, "You turned the house into a brothel. I cannot stand it." He pulled his little knife out of the golden sheath, thrust it in her heart like a worthy *pallekari* [handsome young man, brave fighter for freedom].

"Soussa, mine, who killed you? May he be cursed. May he wear my curse forever as an amulet."

There are conflicting stories about what actually occurs in villages throughout Greece. From the Peloponnesos I received the reply: "In our village there is very strict control between unmarried boys and girls. Not

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88 • HUMAN RELATIONS

156 is not to admit one's own shortcomings, so a family will protect its members by
828 overt support even when they engage in admittedly deviant behavior. An individ-
571 ual is told within the family circle that he is bringing disgrace on all its mem-
594 bers, but he knows equally well that the family will protect him outside from as
many of the consequences of his acts as possible. Families sacrifice much to send
offending sons and daughters into other communities or to protect them in other
ways. Children, in turn, speak well of their parents and tell of their accomplish-
ments, even under circumstances in which the facts would not warrant such
loyalty. The combat unit, for some occasions at least, is therefore the entire ele-
mentary family in its relationships with other families, and, indeed, with the
rest of the world.

571 Congruent with this state of affairs is the fact that when the battle is not
578 between families, the lines of antagonism are not drawn between age grades or
sexes. The battle is not between the old and the young, or between men and
women. It is rather old against other old, young against other young, men against
other men, and women against other women.

571 Let us consider age groupings first. These are seen by the villagers roughly
561 as pre-school children; school children up to twelve years old, at which time they
88 have finished the elementary grades; adolescents, who are considered young until
they marry; married adults; and finally elders, marked by the fact that their chil-
dren are married. The divisions are not clearly defined and there is much over-
lapping, but to a certain extent each younger group treats the next older category
of people with at least some of the deference with which all treat the elders; and
each older group treats the next younger with some of the peremptoriness with
561 which the elders are entitled to treat all others. Since the patterns of deference
576 toward older men and the reciprocal nondeference are the standards for behavior
888 among people of different social position, they shall be described here. Older
men are always seated quickly and are not left standing under any circumstances.
In the winter their seat is directly opposite the fireplace, while the women and
children sit at right angles to the men. Older men are given the best chair the
establishment affords; they are permitted to lean against the stalls in the front of
the church while others usually may not do so. Young men do not smoke in
front of their fathers; there is an avoidance of ribald conversation between the
age groups. Older men in the village are addressed by courtesy titles such as *barba*
(uncle) or, if considerably older than the speaker, as *papuli* (grandfather); and
593 older men are always served first if there are no visitors present. Within the
276 family, sons and daughters kiss the hands of their parents when they return after
521 an absence. All children do this for respected elders who visit the village, while
793 a large majority of the villagers on formal occasions greet the village priest in
this fashion.

Elders in their relations with younger people address them by their given
names and have the privilege of ordering them to run errands or to perform all
kinds of small services. The tone in which older people order the younger is
loud, often peremptory, and frequently is an exhortation to hurry. "*Glighora!*
glighora!" "Fast!" said in a tone of command and dismissal, is perhaps the
most telling expression of a superordinate person's relation to a subordinate. The